Therefore, although the coding side codes the entire VOP data in the units like VOL or GOV of the object using only the intra coding, to achieve instantaneous access to a VOP at a desired time, or to carry out "frame skip control" for decimating image signal to be coded in accordance with the load of a decoder, the decoding side cannot identify the desired VOP to be accessed or the VOP to be decoded in the frame skip control until it recognizes the predictive structure and time information of the coded bit stream by analyzing the coded data of the all the VOPs. This presents a problem of making the decoding processing difficult and prolonging the decoding.

On page 4, after the paragraph ending on line 8, please insert the following heading.
--SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION--

On page 4, line 29, please delete the following heading.
DISCLOSURE OF THE INVENTION

On page 9, replace the paragraph commencing at line 21 with the following amended paragraph:

Fig. 43 44 is a flowchart illustrating the detail processing of a VOP random access mechanism at step ST66 by the decoded VOP selector 107 of the embodiment 7 in accordance with the present invention.

MKM/RJM/slb